

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

Bird · Resident · here all year



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A powerful, heavy-chested falcon with long pointed wings, a slate-blue back, finely barred white underparts and a bold dark moustache below the eye. Females are noticeably larger. Peregrines nest on crags and quarry faces across Galloway and hunt the Solway estuary, where the wader and duck flocks provide winter food. Like buzzards they were nearly lost to pesticides and persecution, and their recovery is one of British conservation's clearest successes.

BEHAVIOUR

Peregrines hunt other birds in the air, climbing above their prey and then dropping in a folded-wing stoop recorded at over 300 km/h, striking with a clenched foot. They do not build a nest, laying instead on a bare ledge scrape. Urban buildings and bridges mimic natural cliffs well enough that peregrines have colonised towns and cities across Britain, hunting feral pigeons.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Falcons (Falconidae)
SIZE	39–50 cm · females much larger than males
UK STATUS	Green-listed

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